



### Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and requisite fee have been submitted along with this Response. Since the Office Action was made final, the RCE was filed so that the Examiner would consider additional references cited in the attached Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) and enter the above amendments. The Applicants kindly request that the Examiner returns an initialed copy of the enclosed IDS form with the next communication from the Patent Office.

Claims 1-4, 6-12, 15-21, 29-31 and 37-43 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 5, 13 and 25 have been amended, and claims 45-77 have been added. It is believed that new claims 45-72 read on the elected species. Claims 24-28 and 34 were previously withdrawn from consideration, and new claims 73-77 have been withdrawn from consideration in the present response. It is believed that the respective independent claims from which the withdrawn dependent claims depend are generic. As a result from the above discussed amendments, claims 5, 13, 14, 22-28, 32-36 and 44-77 are currently pending, and claims 5, 13, 14, 22, 23, 32, 33, 35, 36 and 44-72 are currently under consideration.

Independent claims 5 and 13 have been amended to correct some minor typographical errors. In particular, extraneous "comprising" and "further comprising" language was removed. It is believed that these amendments are editorial in nature and in no way narrow the scope of protection provided by the claims either literally or under the doctrine of equivalents. Withdrawn dependent claim 25 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

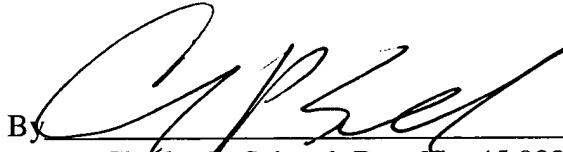


The applicants wish to thank the Examiner for allowing independent claims 5, 13, 22, 32<sup>1</sup> and 44. Since that only the allowed independent claims and their respective dependent claims remain in the application, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance.

It should be understood that the above remarks are not intended to provide an exhaustive basis for patentability or concede the basis for the rejections in the Office Action, but are simply provided to overcome the rejections made in the Office Action in the most expedient fashion.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and the Examiner is requested to pass the case to issue. If the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully Submitted,

By 

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<sup>1</sup> Independent claim 32 was indicated as being allowed on the Office Action Summary Sheet, but it was omitted from the list of allowed claims on page 5 of the Office Action. It is believed that this omission was merely a typographical error because claim 32 was not rejected in the Office Action.